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CURRENT OPINION

Fallacious Principles in the Social Order

A plea for an "intellectual conversion" of Englishmen in regard to property and industry, written by R. A. Tawney, appears in the *Hibbert Journal* for April. The article, which is entitled "The Sickness of Acquisitive Society," offers some radical criticism of the prevailing order of things, with special reference to England. The doctrine of the right to the disposal of property and to the exploitation of economic opportunities, though no longer held by economists, is still the practical foundation of the social organization. This is clear enough from the complaints of commercial leaders on the state restrictions of their gains forced by the war. Claims of this kind are based on the assumption of private rights, rather than on the fulfilment of any social function. The private owner of urban land performs no function as owner, but exercises a right of taxation. And has not Lord Hugh Cecil declared that to interfere with private ownership is theft, and therefore wicked? The doctrine of the last century "that man's self-love is God's providence" has been fully refuted, but with small practical results. Behind it lay the doctrine that economic rights are anterior to and independent of economic functions. A new conservatism has arisen which is resolved to prevent the attempt to extinguish payments which are made not for service but by legal right. It appears in the fusion of the two traditional parties, in the proposal to strengthen the House of Lords, and in the attempt to buy off the working classes by concessions. The world has not yet seen a society in which the acquisition of wealth is contingent on the discharge of social obligations. Industrialism has given opportunity to relentless egotism. The motive of the acquisition of wealth dominates in human ambitions. It makes

the individual the center of his own universe, and dissolves moral principles into a choice of expediences. Under this stimulus men do not become religious or wise or artistic.

The *malaise* of present society is not a matter of accidental maladjustment, but is due to its dominant principle, which divorces service from reward. One result is that there is created a class of pensioners upon industry, who live indolently from its product. And another is the degradation of the laborer. It is those who spend who receive honor in an acquisitive society, not those who serve. The latter are regarded as vulgar and insignificant compared with those who obtain wealth. And there is no happiness among either. The gross inequality which prevails makes for the misdirection of production. The labor that should go to relieve housing congestion, goes instead to the making of hotels and yachts for the rich. Much of the so-called wealth of the nation is really waste.

The general increase of wealth will never prevent industrial disputes while the acquisitive principle reigns, for in that case nothing short of infinity will satisfy. The solution lies in replacing this principle by a principle of function. It is not productivity merely, but the social purpose of industry that matters. The present industrialism is as indefinable as militarism. People talk as if man existed for industry, as the Prussians talked of man existing for war.

The first condition of a right organization of industry is an intellectual conversion, viz., that emphasis be transferred from the opportunities it offers to individuals to the social functions which it performs. The purpose of industry, which is the conquest of nature for the service of men, should be adequately perceived. Property rights which yield income without service should be mercilessly extinguished.

The Human Spirit and Economic Theory

F. W. Orde Ward, who contributes to the *Homiletic Review* for May an article on "The Spiritual Factor in Economics," has scant admiration for the work of economists. Reviewing the progress of economics he finds that we are now asked to concern ourselves with three main elements of the question—capital, labor, and ability. But this analysis is by no means complete. In fact the supreme factor in the "wealth of nations" is left out of account, namely the spiritual factor. By this expression he means the wayward and incalculable human spirit, which "never did and never will tamely follow the line of least resistance," and is "forever spoiling for a fight." Political economists forget that man is "essentially a spiritual being, full of glorious caprices." He seeks novelty, rather than riches or happiness. He finds, with Aristotle, that change is the sweetest of all things. He grows by leaps and bounds, and is subject to unforeseen transformations. His future movements cannot be predicted except in the most general ways. He insists on incessant novelty and is invariably "agin the government." In addition to this there is the disturbing factor of fashion, a spiritual element of infinite range and possibility. A whim of Paris dressmakers may ruin the ribbon manufacturers of Coventry, and send their employees into the overcrowded ranks of casual labor. A physician may write a letter to the *Times* disparaging a common food, and put it largely out of use. A dastardly attack was thus made on the innocent tomato, which was charged with producing cancer.

More stability can be obtained through better education, which should transform fashion into a pioneer of solid progress. The real wealth of nations lies in the children. Man is more than an "economic man," more than what he eats and drinks. The spiritual constituents of his nature are

infinitely stronger than the material. The recognition of this in economic theory would help to combat injustice, and would raise that science from contempt.

Meeting the Church's Obligations to Labor

William H. Morgan gives a striking view of the new obligations of the church to the industrial world in his article on "The Church and Labor Reconstruction" in the *Methodist Review* for March-April. He regretfully admits that everywhere the majority of the workers are alienated from the church. He quotes statistics to show that four-fifths of the population of London are not churchgoers. In New York City the proportion of church attendants is reduced to 15 per cent. The American and the British laborer is indifferent or hostile to the church, while generally profoundly respectful to the Person of Jesus Christ, and accepting the moral principles of Christianity. The state churches of Europe are regarded by labor leaders as hostile to the aspirations of labor. Hall Caine's charge that the church has perverted the teachings of Jesus and become a conservative instead of a progressive force is illustrated by reference to certain historical incidents. Continental immigrants bring to this country the idea that the church is the bulwark of privilege and conservatism. Dr. Morgan cites the parable of the Good Samaritan and that of the Prodigal Son to show two aspects of the religion of Jesus, its manward and its Godward direction. Historically the emphasis has been laid mainly on the latter. Of late a new conception of the gospel has come to the church through men like Thomas Chalmers, Frederick Denison Maurice, Josiah Strong, and Washington Gladden, who have placed before the church the program of the Christianization of the social order. There are indications that the church as a whole is awakening to the

social interpretation of Christianity. Dr. Morgan cites the League of Faith and Labor which has arisen in England, whose program includes co-operation between the churches and the labor organizations in working toward the solution of labor problems and the democratic control of industry. The labor pronouncement of the Canadian Methodist church, recently noticed in this column, is cited as a significant advance. But a warning is offered against passing resolutions simply to be "embalmed in church reports." The Anti-Saloon League has represented the church in action on temperance reform. Let this organization now turn its attention with the same energy to social welfare.

The Function of the Church in Society

In the *International Journal of Ethics* for April appears a study of the place of organized religion in the modern state, entitled "*De Ecclesia*," by C. Delisle Burns. Mr. Burns points out that recent political and industrial trends have been largely conditioned and influenced by the churches. Yet there is a general lack, both within and without the churches, of any adequate idea of their social and political function. A philosophy *de ecclesia* would correct the emphasis on economic issues, the *furor economicus*, which at present rages in social theory. It would also improve the social quality of religion, which has been weakened by the private judgment argument of Protestantism. Again the absence of any true theory leaves people to accept false theories like Erastianism, mediaevalism, or anticlericalism.

The theory to be developed must be a philosophical synthesis and not a mere psychological analysis like that of James. And it should take into account not only the Christian, but other organized religions. It should take the place in modern thought that was taken by Dante's *De Monarchia*

and Hobbes's *Leviathan* for situations now past. The religious association of today is voluntary, an entirely different situation from that which obtained when everybody was a member of "the" Church. A church now resembles an artistic or scientific society, in that one may belong to any part of it, or to none. The influence of the churches on state organization and policy must be recognized and estimated. The profound influence of religion on state education is another factor to be considered. But the effect of political concepts on the church is even greater than the reverse influence. Thus in times of political stress the pulpit returns an echo to the political platform. The Roman church during the war uttered discordant voices across the frontiers. Christianity is regarded as indifferent to political forms, but "the *obiter dictum* of the New Testament that established authorities should be revered, has had the most unfortunate consequences." In practice the church is what Hobbes said it was, either the state itself or a department of the state. The evil result of this Erastianism is that there remains no adequate criticism of the state. Economic nationalism requires to be "held in check by some strong social group representing an admittedly higher interest."

A treatise *de ecclesia* should show the relation of the churches to each other. The churches should not be regarded as separate units, but should co-operate in an organized world by religious associations. Withdrawal from membership should not be attended by any ill-feeling. The state should be superior to the church on matters of law and order, and of taxation; but the church should be superior on questions of morality, of life and death, and of human affections. There would normally be little difficulty, Mr. Burns believes, in abiding by these distinctions in detail.

The expectation is expressed that the churches will in the era now opening,

experience great changes in the direction of modernism and the weakening of institutional life. The churches are on trial as never before. Mr. Burns asserts that if they return to the "beggarness of vision" which characterized them a century ago, "we may candidly hope to destroy them all."

Education for the Ministry

Professor William Adams Brown of Union Seminary discusses "The Seminary of Tomorrow" in the *Harvard Theological Review* for April. He feels assured in giving an affirmative answer to the question, Will there be any seminary? In the coming era only indispensable institutions will survive. But the crisis has shown that religion is indispensable; and has brought at the same time a new emphasis on the work of teaching, and a new appreciation of the teacher. It is by teaching that the doctrines which impelled the German armies must be counteracted. The seminary is the teacher of the teachers of religion, and must have a decisive place in the future of society.

Seminaries suffer mainly from two evils, in which they reflect the defects of the church itself. The first is denominationalism, and the second is intellectualism. The latter is described as "the disposition to accept Christianity as a series of beliefs, or at least of practices and experiences which follow upon the acceptance of such beliefs." The impression which observers receive is that a denomination is a group banded together to propagate a type of belief. Intellectualism in religion is being countered by two forms of reaction. There is the enthusiasm of the revivalist which reduces the teaching function to a minimum. The other reaction is in the direction of practical service, which as in the work of the Y.M.C.A. may be highly beneficent, but in itself lacks the necessary theoretical foundation. We must therefore find a way between the old denominational intel-

lectualism and the newly emerged, inarticulate religion of sentiment and practical expediency.

It has become clear that the religion of the future must be a religion of the whole man, and man is revealed in recent events as acting on sentiment more than on belief. Differences of religious type, the Catholic mystical and the Protestant ethical type, for example, must be recognized. The seminary of the future must take these facts into account, and with them the increasing demand for unity which characterizes religion. The curricula of seminaries should be framed with an eye to the current tendencies. The sole object must be the training of ministers, and Professor Brown gives the counsel of perfection that all that is not necessary for this must be excluded and all that is necessary for it must be included. The training must be specialized, without losing sight of the things held in common. Systematic theology will be taught as a study which defines the nature of the gospel for a world that is seeking unity through variety. What is valued and revered in other denominations than his own will have to be understood by the student, and history will be studied not only from the past forward, but from the present back. Dominating all study will be the practical purpose of gaining a sympathetic understanding of our fellow-men.

Novel Aspects of Religion in England

England is witnessing important changes in religion as well as in industry. Some of these are reviewed by Philip Whitwell Wilson in the *Outlook* for May 21, in an article entitled "After-the-War Religion in England." The nation is experiencing a revival of faith which is difficult of analysis. Religion expresses itself in the devotions of bereaved relatives of soldiers, in which Protestants are imitating Catholic practices which were once regarded as superstitions. At the same time others, like

Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, are seeking definite intercourse with the departed.

The British workman has not felt the revulsion against Christianity which is common on the Continent, for he remembers that most of the leaders toward liberty in the nation's history were "reared on the Bible." Mr. Wilson gives large importance to the Brotherhood Movement, which before the war drew an attendance at Sunday afternoon meetings of about six hundred thousand men. This organization has a philanthropic interest, and has played a part in politics on the side of reform. It stands between the trade unions and the churches. While distinctly Christian, it has no sacraments, creed, or catechism, and its membership has no formal relation to church membership. Its affinities are with the non-conformist churches; but as these churches seek on the ritual side to approach the Established Church, they may fail to make connection with this lay movement whose only ritual is a handshake and a slap on the back.

American Quakers Condemn Militarism

A statement was issued in January by the Representative Meeting of the Society of Friends relating to the question of compulsory military education in America. The framers of this statement assert that they do not wish to avert many changes which the war had induced. But there has been an undue repression of conscience and free speech. Individual consciences have been cajoled or threatened into conformity. Public sentiment has been united by means of propaganda. "Much that we have fought against in the militarism and autocracy of Prussia we have adopted in modified form." It is time to lay aside our skepticism of the efficiency of moral and spiritual forces and to recur to the principles of Jesus.

While not minimizing the moral gains of the war through sacrifice, they protest

against the adoption of the very ideas and plans against which our soldiers have battled. The training of youth to arms creates the spirit of militarism. A commission appointed by the governor of Massachusetts to inquire into the question of military training reported both school teachers and army officers to be averse to it, and pointed out that no country in the world today possesses such a system, with the exception of the two rivals of the Pacific, Australia and Japan. The new English Education Bill makes no such provision.

Apart from the loss of production entailed by military service, there arises the still more serious objection of the moral atmosphere of the system. It is based upon unthinking obedience, which is "not the best attitude of the citizen of a free democracy." The military ideal of life would cancel much of the heritage of freedom which America has enjoyed for two hundred years. The document closes with a paragraph in support of the proposed League of Nations, as "an organization of the peace-will of mankind."

Dr. Denney's Theology

It is now almost two years since Scotland was bereaved of Principal James Denney, one of her most prolific and able theological writers. He was among the last of a group of staunchly biblical theologians, who, while accommodating themselves to modern thought, never felt the necessity of radically striking off from traditional viewpoints, and who on this account have enabled the laymen of their communion to keep nearly abreast of their theological guides, making a safe, if modest advance. It is probably safe to say that in so far as Dr. Denney's actual opinions are concerned, they will have little influence on the future of theology. He was not a great pathfinder. But his work will always command respect for its apologetic value in his own generation.

A discerning estimate of his theology from the pen of Professor W. P. Paterson of Edinburgh, appears under the foregoing title in the *Constructive Quarterly* for March. The study is introduced by a sketch of Scottish thought in the preceding era, especially in the disturbed period during which Dr. Denney's views were in formation. Modern criticism of the Bible became familiar to Scottish students through German influence, and constituted a challenge to the champions of the strictly biblical theologians. For a long time the principal aim of theology was to combat all novelty of opinion. But gradually new doctrines obtained recognition, and the wiser apologists found it vain to depend on the old assertions of verbal inerrancy and authority of Scripture. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century two ways were taken to meet the demands of the situation. One was that of a Scoto-Catholic group who followed the example of the Anglo-Catholics and defended those dogmas which may be regarded as the Catholic stratum of the Westminster Confession. The alternative course was to defend the principal doctrines of Christianity by an appeal to reason without the assertion of any dogmatic authority. This course was followed by a philosophical school which flowered in Principal Caird. But others avoided speculative philosophy and made their appeal on the basis of the inner experience, which is independent of the witness of Scripture or church. The position taken by these cultured Evangelicals corresponded to that of Schleiermacher. It preserved the faith while also securing freedom for critical study. While leaders in the Church of Scotland worked in the realm of philosophical theology, the Free Church produced such distinguished biblical scholars as A. B. Davidson, Robertson Smith, George Adam Smith, and A. B. Bruce. It is to this distinguished group that Dr. Denney belonged; and none of the company so

fully faced the theological issues raised by the modern situation.

While Dr. Denney repudiated the word "apologist" as applied to himself, he was in reality more of an apologist than anything else. His aim was to make the faith of the gospel intelligible and to defend it. Possessed of exceptional gifts, learning and style, he was "overwhelmingly religious" in his interests. His conclusions were made through intuition. He was fond of confounding distinctions that others took for granted, and his mind had a certain bias toward paradox. Dr. Denney's starting-point was not Scripture but experience, which he called "the basis of all theological doctrine." By experience he referred to evangelical Christian experience alone. In this he found certain convictions about the work and person of Christ, which formed the nucleus of his theological system. The Scriptures were of inestimable value for their records of the events which made Christian salvation available. His use of the Scriptures is as a trustworthy guide to Jesus and the Gospel. He does not undertake to defend their plenary inspiration or historical inerrancy. His position on this matter is identical with that of Ritschl.

The emphasis in Dr. Denney's theology is laid on the exposition of Christianity as a mediatorial religion. Christ is the object of Christian faith, and "everything depends on the fact that the believer can be sure of his Lord." This faith in Christ conditions right belief in God. Christ's mediation involves atonement, which is the "focus of revelation." And whereas, Schleiermacher limited the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice to a moral influence on the believer, Dr. Denney insists on an objective atonement, reliance upon which is a condition of a living Christianity. In fact an objective doctrine of the atonement for him enters into the substance of Christianity. And it involves a work "which tells upon God as well as upon the sinful." He had

difficulty with the exact terms to describe the basis of man's reconciliation, and while he appears to argue for a substitutionary atonement, he could not bring himself to say that Christ was punished, or that his merit is imputed, and ended by favoring the theory of MacLeod Campbell, which orthodoxy had previously shunned. When he summarizes his religion in a creed, he finds it sufficient to affirm: I believe in God through Jesus Christ his only Son, our Savior.

The study of Dr. Denney's method which follows, makes note of his increasing indifference to the ecumenical creeds, his repudiation of predestination as a "counsel of despair," his warm loyalty to the church as the mother of the believers, coupled with a dismissal of Catholic sacramental claims, and his conservative eschatology.

Belief, Truth, and Value

Wesley Raymond Wells, in the *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods* for May 8, treats the subject of "The Biological Foundations of Belief" from the standpoint of a pragmatic realist. The article indicates both its writer's general agreement with the Jamesian type of pragmatism now represented by Dr. F. C. S. Schiller, and his divergence from this position on the relation of truth to survival-value. James extended the Darwinian principle of the physical evolution of man to explain his mental processes by evolution. This led to the theory of behaviorism, which no longer regards the mental life as subjective, but treats the consciousness of man objectively in terms of stimulus and response. For behaviorism beliefs are not subjective entities, but objective processes. Thinking is not an ethereal process occurring in a vacuum, but is a process consisting of responses of the animal type. Belief is a positive response, disbelief a negative response.

The biological foundations of belief may be exhibited in two ways. First it may be shown in what manner instincts which are derived from the biological struggle for life determine beliefs. And secondly, attention may be called to the direct survival-value which beliefs possess. Mr. McDougall in his "Social Psychology" has shown that religion rests on complex emotions, and that these can be analyzed into simple emotions which are associated with primary instincts. The possession of these instincts and emotions does not in itself constitute religion. They must be accompanied by a belief in the reality of some more or less supernatural object. But without such instincts religious belief would not exist. The instinctive basis of religious belief is illustrated by the religious extension of human love, the extreme assertion of which is Freud's view of religion as a sublimation of sex instinct.

Professor Wells devotes the remainder of his article to a refutation of Dr. Schiller's view of the relation of truth to survival-values, a view which he describes as the "pragmatic fallacy." Though it is true that pessimism as an accepted philosophy can never survive in the race, since a pessimistic race would perish from the earth, this fact does not of itself prove a pessimistic philosophy untrue. The real conflict with Dr. Schiller lies in a divergence on the definition of "truth." The definition here asserted is opposed to the personal idea of truth, and is that of science and common sense—simply what is "so," independently of all personal relations. Fundamentally truth cannot be predicated of beliefs and judgments, although we may do so by courtesy. It can justly be predicated only of propositions, theories, and hypotheses. There is a clear-cut distinction between the value of beliefs and the truth of propositions. Beliefs may have survival-value, may contribute to human evolution, even though as propositions they are not true.

Catholic versus Protestant Conceptions of Christianity

Professor George Cross contributes to the *American Journal of Theology* for April an interpretation of the "Federation of the Christian Churches in America." This movement has now been in operation for some years, and has made considerable progress toward the realization of its aims. It arose partly from the growing conviction that the Christian message should be given to the whole world in the shortest possible time. In line with the general tendency toward the obliteration of provincialism, the movement, organized in the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, aims to promote "the spirit of fellowship, service, and co-operation" among the various denominations, and thus to "express the fellowship and catholic unity of the Christian church." The work attempted includes the encouragement of local churches to continue along certain practical lines of work, as e.g., the training of teachers, remedying social evils in the community, providing wholesome recreation, and supporting the cause of education. The whole community is to be thus made to feel the impact of the Christian conscience. These activities are supplemented by the attempt to overcome waste of men and means through duplication at home and in the foreign enterprises of the churches. The program extends to the field of international relations, into which it is hoped by united effort of the churches to infuse a Christianizing influence.

The great significance of the movement is that it is consciously Protestant in principle in contrast to previous Catholic union plans. It does not say, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church," but "I believe in the mutual co-operation of all Christian churches in one purpose"—a distinctly modern position. It is opposed by those who are actively seeking union on Catholic principles. It looks toward the

future as they look toward the past. Dr. Cross approves the Protestant recognition of individualism, and opposes a universalism that destroys it. "It is not necessary that Christians should be formed into an exclusive *organization*. It is necessary that they constitute in their totality one great spiritual *organism*." Catholicism seeks a unity of control, while Protestantism seeks a unity of purpose.

The two aims are in contrast again in respect to their respective underlying views of religion. To the Catholic man is a fallen creature of God in a fallen world, and Christianity is a supernatural provision to save man from the natural. Contact with the natural is dangerous, and the ideal of life is ascetic. The presuppositions of the Federal Council program are the reverse of this. Protestantism, though often confused on these matters in the past, has learned another interpretation of religion. It has stoutly maintained the worth of the natural order of life. Marriage, for example, is regarded as fundamental, not as a concession to human weakness. Protestantism again, Dr. Cross asserts, has been favorable to the work of science, has regarded commerce as a means of Christian character-development, and has upheld the dignity of political life. It finds the supernatural within the natural. Sin is outrageous because it is unnatural.

Efforts toward Christian unity have hitherto been expressed in three forms, the liturgical, the confessional, and the institutional. The federation movement will modify worship, bringing dignity without sacramentalism. As to confessions, the movement proceeds on the basis of the Evangelical Alliance of 1846; but some further step is necessary. Creeds and confessions are worthy of our reverence, but the Christian life must be progressively interpreted. It is on the institutional phase of union that the Federal Council places its greatest emphasis. In this

respect federation begins with local churches, and other associations not bearing the name of churches. As this interdenominational organization grows, "it would seem that in the course of time present denominational boundaries must fade away." The chief dangers of the scheme lie in the possibility of forgetting the basis of faith in the midst of external tasks, and on the other hand, the danger to freedom in the emphasis on organization.

Religious Education in England

We read in the *Hibbert Journal* for April a challenge to the churches of England to meet the educational situation which has been created by the war and by the new Education Act. The article by Foster Watson is entitled "Education: a New Opportunity for the Churches." The mediæval day school of the church and the modern Sunday school have each represented the attempt to bring a spiritual unity to life, and to fulfil the great aim of Erasmus, that of breaking down the division between sacred and profane. This tendency has been emphasized by the world-war. With the obliteration of the artificial barrier education and religion come more vitally into union than ever before.

At first sight it would appear that education has become dynamic while religion has remained static. Not only has a vast extension of education been effected by the Education Act. The Y.M.C.A. is reconstructing its equipment with a view to becoming a permanent educational force of the broadest character. "The hut is to be a village institute." The army of soldiers is being transformed into an army of students. Further extension of adult education is being planned to harmonize with the reduction of hours of labor. University extension is also proceeding with increased government support. Women share equally with men in all the benefits offered.

Meanwhile the churches apparently stand in rapt amazement. The Bible has

lost ground in the secondary schools, and there seems a tendency to drop it from consideration in current discussions. But in reality its claims on educators are increased by the Higher Criticism, which makes it a more profitable study, and in the cause of humanism and culture it does not deserve to be overlooked. If the Bible should be ousted from the day schools, the churches will have to develop Sunday schools of a new type. This type will be not elementary only, as formerly, but the "college type." But it would be contrary to the spirit of the age to confine this teaching to Sunday and thus violate the now accepted spiritual unity of what was formerly called sacred and secular. Advantage should be taken of the clauses in the Education Act which recognizes "voluntary" agencies in supplying education in the spiritual basis of character development in continuation schools. Already an Anglican publication has pointed out the opening. The Free Churches, Dr. Watson believes, cannot but take the same view.

If this is taken advantage of it may result in wrecking the Sunday school as an institution. But it will be making way thereby for something more efficient. It will utilize the best-trained Sunday-school teachers in a larger work than they have been doing. It will result in a better spiritual tone in the day schools. "Our new teachers in day schools must be, as Cromwell said of the army of soldiers he gathered together, men of the spirit."

But Dr. Watson advocates not the dissolution but the transformation of the Sunday school. While the day school will give religious interpretation to its general studies, the church school will still have a large field in which to work without duplicating this aim. It should teach ecclesiastical history, biblical criticism, theology, and the philosophy of religion. The transformed institution might be called a "Sunday College."